

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 021825Z JUNE 75

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2139

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

S E C R E T USNATO 3070

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: NATO TREATMENT OF OPTION III

REF: STATE 119269

DEPARTMENT PASS TO USNMR SHAPE AND USCINCEUR

1. BRITISH NATO REPS HAVE STRESSED TO US ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THEIR VIEW THAT MBFR WORKING GROUP MUST UNDERTAKE A STUDY OF OPTION III. WE HAVE EXPLAINED DRAWBACKS WE SEE IN SENDING OPTION III ISSUES TO WG, BUT UK REPS STILL APPEAR INTERESTED IN SUCH PROCEDURE.

2. WE BELIEVE UK ATTITUDE REFLECTS GENERAL UK INTERESE IN EX-HAUSTIVE MILITARY TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF MBFR ISSUES, EAGERNESS OF SOME UK EXPERTS TO PROMOTE WG ACTIVITY, AND RECOGNITION THAT THROUGH WG UK CAN MAXIMIZE ITS INFLUENCE OVER PACE AND DIRECTION OF NATO CONSIDERATION OF MBFR PROPOSALS. THE UK USUALLY TAKES THE LEAD IN CALLING FOR WG ANALYSIS OF MBFR ISSUES, AND UK EXPERTS COME FROM LONDON FOR EACH WG MEETING WITH EXTENSIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR WG PAPERS. BECAUSE OF LIMITED CONTRIBUTIONS OF OTHER MEMBERS, WG PAPERS NOT BASED ON US INPUTS ARE LARGELY DEVELOPED BY UK EXPERTS AND ACTING CHAIRMAN OF WG. (GROUP CAPTAIN SMITH, UK).

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3. FRG HAS ALSO EXPRESSED INTEREST IN WORKING GROUP STUDY OF SOME ASPECTS OF OPTION III. WHILE FRG REPS GENERALLY DO NOT TAKE THE LEAD IN SENDING MBFR PROPOSALS TO THE WORKING GROUP OR IN WG STUDIES, THEY ALMOST ALWAYS SUPPORT UK INITIATIVES IN

ACTIVATING THE WORKING GROUP.

4. WE BELIEVE APPROACH OF UK AND FRG TOWARD NATO HANDLING OF OPTION II WILL INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDE OF OTHER DELEGATIONS. IF WASHINGTON DESIRES EXPEDIENTS NATO CONSIDERATION OF OPTION III PROPOSAL, WE RECOMMEND US APPROACH UK AND FRG AUTHORITIES BEFORE PRESENTATION ON OPTION III TO THE NAC, MAKING THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- WE STRONGLY URGE THAT THE BRITISH (AND FRG) NOT SUGGEST THAT OPTION III OR ANY PART OF IT BE REMANDED TO THE WORKING GROUP.

-- WE ARE PREPARED FOR FULL CONSIDERATION OF OUR OPTION III PROPOSAL AT NATO. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT WANT THIS CONSIDERATION COMPLICATED BY UNNECESSARY ACTIVATION OF NATO BUREAUCRATIC MECHANISMS.

-- ANY EXPERTS THE ALLIES THINK SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN NATO STUDY OF OPTION III CAN PARTICIPATE BY ATTENDING SPC MEETINGS AND CONTRIBUTING TO SPC CONSIDERATION OF OPTION III. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO HAVE A WORKING GROUP STUDY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOR MILITARY ANALYSIS AND INPUT.

-- ACTIVATING THE WORKING GROUP WILL DETRACT FROM THE STUDY OF OPTION III. THE FOCUS OF ATTENTION WILL SHIFT FROM THE PROPOSAL ITSELF TO COMPOSITION OF A WG STUDY REGARDING THE PROPOSAL. WE WANT A GOOD, PROBING EXCHANGE OF OPTION III AT NATO. BUT WE DO NOT WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN REWRITING, REORGANIZING, AND WORD-SMITHING WORKING GROUP STUDIES ON THIS SUBJECT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 18 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NATO03070
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750698/abbrzkis.tel
Line Count: 87
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 119269
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 APR 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <08 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: NATO TREATMENT OF OPTION III
TAGS: PARM, NATO
To: STATE INFO BONN
LONDON
MBFR VIENNA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006